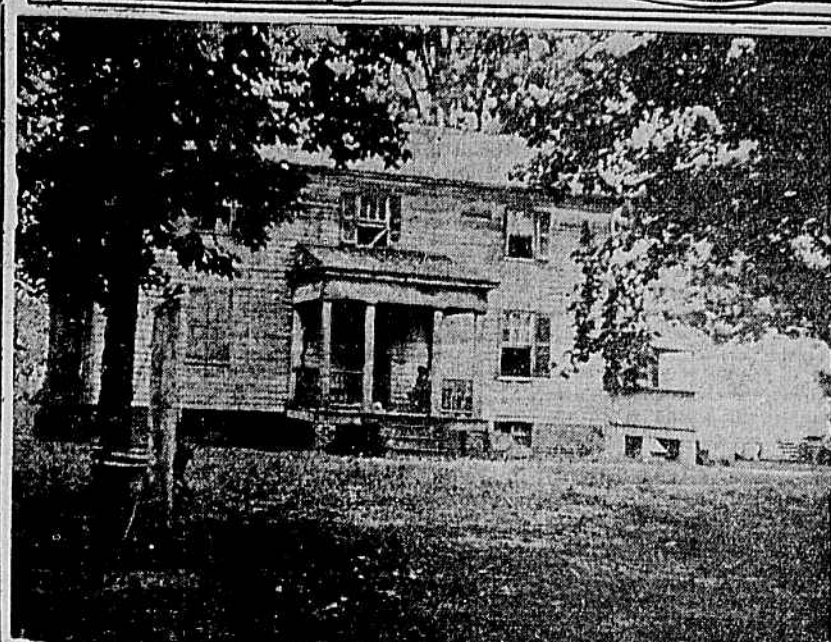
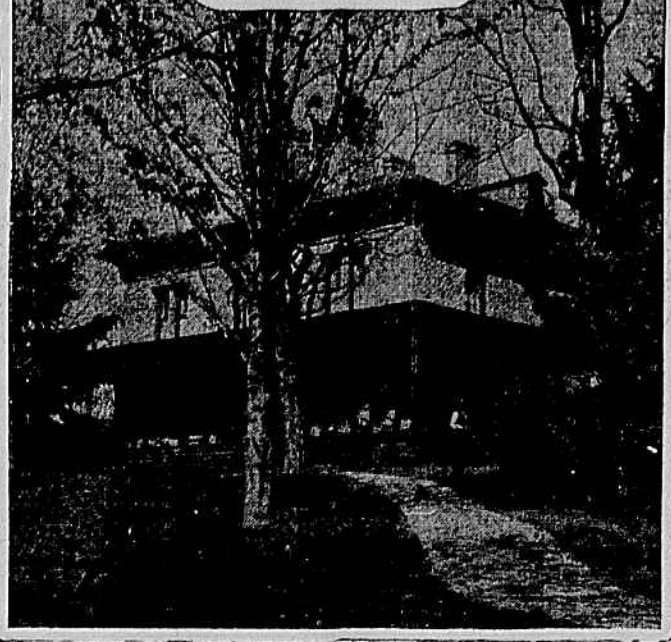
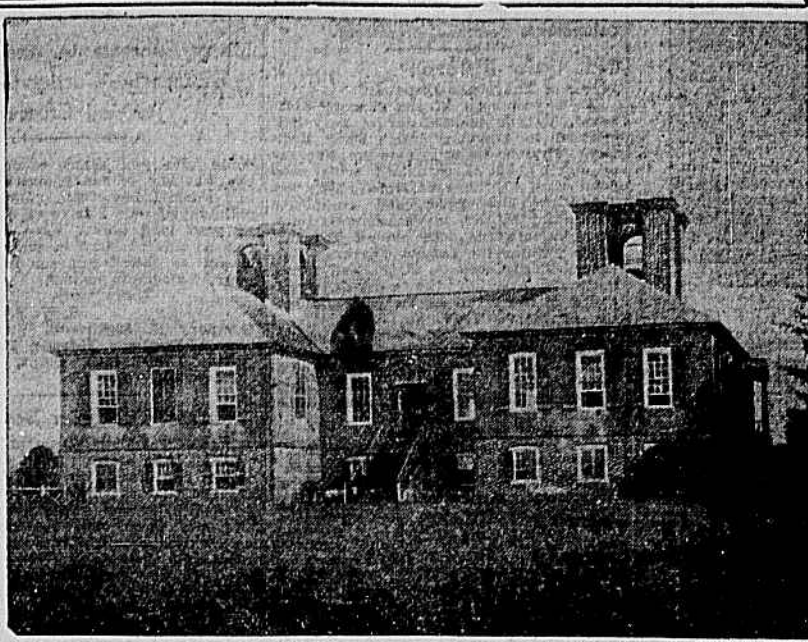


# HISTORIC VIRGINIA HOMES OF GENERAL R. E. LEE, ALL OF WHICH ARE STANDING TO-DAY, THOUGH NOT OWNED BY THE LEE FAMILY



Stratford, Westmoreland county, birthplace of Lee, and the ancestral home of all the Virginia Lees.

BY CHARLES MARSHALL GRAVES.

General R. E. Lee had, in the course of his life, no less than six distinct homes in Virginia. It is a common lament among Virginians that so many of the State's splendid old mansions are destroyed by fire or go to a sorrowful decay from sheer neglect, and so it is singular enough and dear to the heart of the antiquarian that every house in Virginia which General Lee occupied as his residence, with possibly a single exception, is standing to-day.

They are "Stratford," in Westmoreland county, place of his birth; "Arlington," scene of his marriage and for many years home of his happy wedded life; No. 707 East Franklin Street, Richmond, the war residence; "Derwent," Powhatan county, the humble little cottage to which he fled for rest and recuperation for the only few months of leisure in his whole life, and finally the president's house at Washington and Lee University, which he occupied a few days more than five years, and in which he died. The home omitted is that in Alexandria. I do not know whether either of the two houses the family occupied there is still in existence.

## Sturdy Old Stratford.

No place in Virginia could hardly be quite so remote as "Stratford," the stately and ancient parental roof of all the Virginia Lees. The house, built in the shape of the letter H, stands on a picturesque bluff which rises on the south side of the Potomac River. The first Stratford, built by Richard Lee, the first of the family to come to Virginia, was burned in the time of his son, Thomas Lee, early in the eighteenth century. Col. Lee, a member of the King's Council at Williamsburg, was one of the most popular men of his day, and wherever the news of the fire was spread, generous hands were ready to give aid in the rebuilding. No less a person than Queen Anne, his gracious sovereign, sent a gift of royal proportions. The result was that the second "Stratford," that in which General Lee first saw the light a century ago, and which, though considerably battered, is still bravely defying the ravages of time, was far more massive and pretentious than its predecessor.

The cost of the house is estimated by historians at \$50,000, and as much of the manual labor in its construction was done by slaves, the far greater portion of the sum, which was princely in that day, was expended for English bricks, hand-carved moldings, mahog-

any furniture and costly decorations. Such walls are not seen now outside of a fortress. They are three feet thick, and two centuries of wind and weather have beat upon them in vain. Broad steps lead up to the door which faces the river.

## In the Brave Old Days.

In the days of the Lees, and especially of "Lighthorse Harry," of the Revolution, this ancient door swung open at the touch of every hand. Gay were the days, bright faces merry laughter, music of the dance—to such sounds and such scenes even the heavy old walls rang with their echoes.

John Estlin Cooke, in his life of Lee, draws this happy picture of Stratford, which one likes to dwell upon. "Here," says he, "had flourished three generations of Lees, dispensing a profuse and open-handed hospitality. In each generation some one of the family had distinguished himself, and attracted the 'best company' to 'Stratford.' The old walls had rung with merriment, the great door was wide open, everybody was welcome, and one could see there a good illustration of a long passed manner of living, which had the merit of being hearty, open-handed and picturesque."

Of the gay, but wholesome life at Stratford, General Lee was to know personally very little; but who can estimate the influence of the beloved birthplace, the old family home upon a man's character. The home of a man, people, is very dear to him and its traditions sacred. General Lee certainly loved Stratford very tenderly.

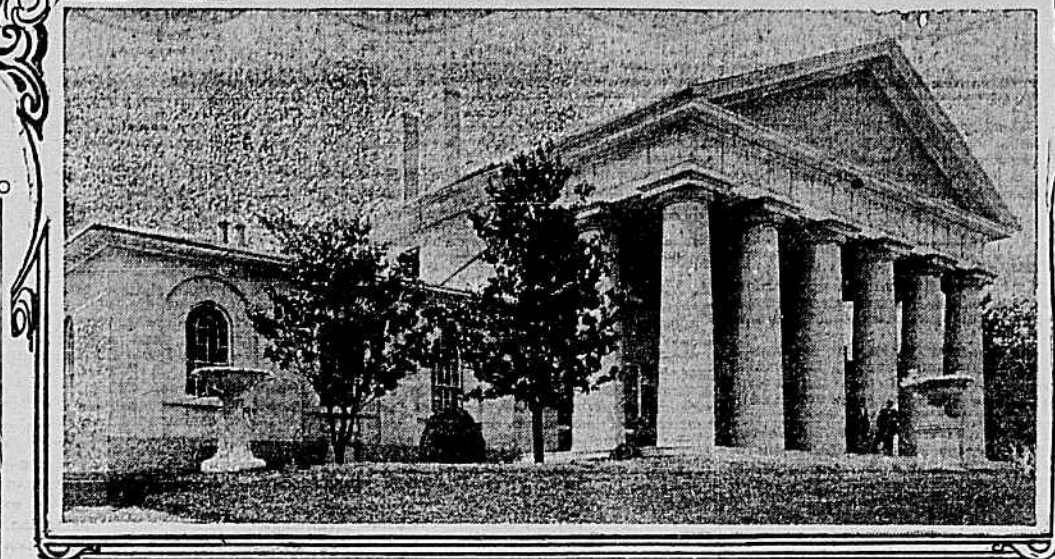
When an old man he wrote thus to a young lady who made a sketch of his birthplace:

"I have just received from Richmond the two photographic copies of your painting of 'Stratford.' Your picture vividly recalls scenes of my earliest recollections and happiest days. Though unseen for years, every feature of the house is familiar to me."

## Always "Robert" to Him.

When Robert was four years old, General Harry Lee took his family to Alexandria to reside, very probably for the purpose of affording his children better educational advantages than could be secured in the country. And so General Lee was destined to grow to manhood almost within sight of the beautiful home of Mary Custis. The families were intimate, and young Lee was a frequent visitor at Arlington. It was during his school days at Alexandria that General Lee became the mainstay, intimate companion and comfort of his mother. It is an interesting fact that during the Lee residence in Alexandria, the rector of the Episcopal Church there was young William Meade, afterwards bishop of the Diocese of Virginia. He it was who taught Lee his catechism, and when dying, called General Lee to him and said: "Robert, I cannot call you 'general,' I taught you your catechism too often."

Lee became the master of Arlington



President's house, Washington and Lee University, which General Lee occupied during five years of his presidency of that institution, and in which he died. Arlington, which came into General Lee's possession through his marriage with Miss Mary Custis, daughter of George Washington Parke Custis, adopted son of General Washington and grandson of Martha Washington.

practically from his marriage with Mary Anne Randolph Custis, only daughter of George Washington Parke Custis, which occurred June 30, 1831, two years after his graduation at West Point. There was then no place in America like Arlington. George Washington Parke Custis was the grandson of Martha Washington and the adopted son of Washington himself, and he had inherited all the Washington plate, portraits and pictures of every kind, when the family residence at Mt. Vernon was broken up, and all these, with Martha Washington's dresses and all the precious personal relics of the "Father of his Country," were at Arlington, the priceless possession of Lieutenant R. E. Lee's bride.

## Night of the Wedding.

Arlington has thus been described as it appeared on the night of General Lee's wedding:

"The stately assemblage never held a happier assemblage; its broad portico and widespread wings held out open arms, as it were, to welcome the coming guests. Its simple Doric columns graced domestic comforts with a classic air. Its halls and chambers were adorned with the patriots and heroes, and with illustrations and relics of the great Revolution, and of the Father of his Country. Without and within history and tradition seemed to breathe their legends upon a canvas as soft as a dream of peace."

General Lee lived there thirty years, and there all his children were born. Early in 1861, when the war cloud finally burst with the secession of Virginia, General Lee found it necessary to move his family from Arlington to the White House, another home of Mrs. Lee, on the Pamunkey River. But the residence here was soon disturbed by McClellan's forces, and the family came within the lines of Richmond's defenses, and finally towards the close of the war to No. 707 East Franklin Street, now the home of the Virginia Historical Society. Arlington was presently in the possession

## WOLSELEY'S TRIBUTE TO GENERAL LEE

Field Marshal Viscount Wolseley, of the British Army, who was an observer with Lee's army during several campaigns, wrote of the great commander:

"Every incident in my visit to General Lee is indelibly stamped on my memory. I have taken no special trouble to remember all he said to me then and during subsequent conversations, and yet it is still fresh in my recollection. But it is natural it should be so, for he was the ablest general, and to me seemed the greatest man I ever conversed with; and yet I have had the privilege of meeting Von Moltke and Prince Bismarck, and at least upon one occasion had a very long and intensely interesting conversation with the latter. General Lee was one of the few men who ever seriously impressed and awed me with their natural, their inherent greatness. Forty years have come and gone since our meeting, yet the majesty of his manly bearing, the genial, winning grace, the sweetness of his smile and the impressive dignity of his old-fashioned style of address come back to me among the most cherished of my recollections. His greatness made me humble, and I never felt my own individual insignificance more keenly than I did in his presence. He was a beautiful character, and of him it might truthfully be written: 'In righteousness he did judge and make war.'"

sion of Northern soldiers, and was not finally restored to the Lee family until after General Lee's death. Much of the family plate and many of the paintings from Arlington are now in the possession of General G. W. C. Lee, at Ravenswood, but I believe not all of the Washington memorials which belonged to Mrs. Lee have ever been given up by the national government.

Of the Richmond residence of General Lee I need not speak, as another article bearing directly upon the Lee memorials in this city appears elsewhere in this section.

## Lonely Cottage Home.

I come now to a point in General Lee's life which has been often overlooked. Many people, otherwise quite familiar with Lee's career, have lost sight of or never known, the interesting fact that for some months after the war he lived in a locality even as remote as Stratford, and that he sought it, apparently, with the purpose of passing there the remainder of his days; certainly at least as a place of rest, and as affording a refuge from the outside world.

As soon as it was known that General Lee had returned from Appomattox hundreds called on him. Mothers wished to ask about their sons who had not yet returned, and some, strangers even, brought him food, hearing a false report that his family was in extreme want. It was impossible for him to get the quiet here that after four years of the heavy burden of war was absolutely necessary. He was also anxious to get Mrs. Lee, now a confirmed invalid, out of the city for the summer months. He said in a letter to General Long:

"I am looking for some little quiet home in the woods where I can procure shelter and my daily food, if permitted by the victor. I wish to get Mrs. Lee out of the city as soon as practical." About this time Mrs. Elizabeth Randolph Cooke, a granddaughter of Edmund Randolph, Washington's attorney-general, offered General Lee as nearly what he wanted as it was possible to find. She had on her splendid estate in Cumberland county, fifty miles up the James River Valley from Richmond, a small unoccupied cottage known as "Derwent,"

The offer, delicately and gracefully made, was gratefully accepted, and General Lee, accompanied by Mrs. Lee and their daughters, Misses Agnes and Mildred, left Richmond just before sunset of a day near the end of June.

## Slept Under the Skies.

The journey was made by horse-packet on the James River Canal, and Captain Edmund Randolph Cooke, in a recent letter to R. E. Lee, General Lee's son, says that the boat captain had the most comfortable bed put up that night that he could command, and this was offered to General Lee. But the soldier habit was strong. He preferred to sleep on deck under the open sky, and did so, with his military cloak thrown over him. Captain Cooke concludes that this was the great soldier's last night's sleep without a roof to shelter him.

They left the boat at Pemberton about sunrise the next morning, and, accompanied by Captain Cooke and General Custis Lee, were driven to "Oakland," Mrs. Cooke's home, in Cumberland. Here the Lees remained a week, honored guests of Mrs. Cooke, before taking up their residence at "Derwent," two miles away, on the same estate, but across the line in Powhatan county.

"Derwent" is not a cottage in the usual sense of the word, with every room on the ground floor. It is two stories high, of one room width, with a hall running through the middle, giving two rooms on each floor. General Lee wrote of it soon after going there to his son, Captain Robert E. Lee, author of "Recollections and Letters of General R. E. Lee": "We are all well and established in a comfortable little house in a grove of oaks belonging to Mr. Thomas Cooke. It contains four rooms, and there is a house in the ward which, when fitted up, will give us another. Only your mother, Agnes and Mildred, are with us."

The house is in an excellent state of preservation and the grove of oaks which

"Derwent," Powhatan county, the humble cottage on Mrs. Elizabeth Randolph Cooke's estate, where General Lee sought rest after the war. There are only two negatives of this house in existence, and this is the first time a picture of it has ever appeared in any newspaper. It is now occupied by negroes.

## CAPTAIN GORDON McCABE'S TRIBUTE TO GENERAL LEE

### Lee After Second Battle of Cold Harbor, June 3d, 1864.

(Where Grant had met such a bloody repulse that his troops refused to obey his orders to assault again.)

"Such was the retrospect of this thirty days' campaign to Lee, as he sat in his simple tent, pitched upon the very ground whence, but two years before, with positions reversed, he had driven McClellan in rout and disaster to the James; and though Lee, the man, was modest, he was but mortal, and Lee, the soldier, could not but be conscious of his own genius; and, having proved the matchless temper of the blade which Providence, or Destiny, or call it what you will, had placed within his hands, he may be sure that his heart was stirred with high hopes of his country's deliverance, and that through these hopes his pliant genius was inspired to discern in each new difficulty but fresh device."

"And his veterans, of confirmed hardihood, watching the gracious serenity of that noble face, conscious of the same warlike virtues which made him dear to them, caught up and reflected this confidence, remembering that he had declared to them in general orders after Spotsylvania: 'It is in your power, under God, to defeat the last effort of the enemy, establish the independence of your native land, and earn the lasting love and gratitude of your countrymen and the admiration of mankind.'"

Lee, informed of the disaster at 5:30 A. M., had hidden his aide, Colonel Charles Venable, to ride quickly to the right of the army and bring up two brigades of Anderson's old division, commanded by Mahone, for time was too precious to observe military etiquette and send the orders through Hill. Shortly after, the general-in-chief reached the front in person, and all men took heart when they descried the grave and gracious face, and "Traveler" sleeping proudly, as if conscious that he bore upon his back the weight of a nation. Beauregard was already at the Lee House, a commanding position, 500 yards in rear of the Crater, and Hill had galloped to the right to organize an attacking column.

shaded the house and its distinguished occupants, shades it now.

## In the Deep Recesses.

The place is now most difficult of access, and after careful inquiry, I find that no photographs or sketches have ever been taken of the house and grove, save two exposures I made on a trip there some months ago constituting, as I am convinced, the only representations in existence of a historic landmark of uncommon and pathetic interest. One of the photographs is reproduced in the accompanying cut. The house is now occupied by a negro family, the children of which were anxious to "get in" the picture.

General Lee was a resident of "Derwent" from June until October, entering upon his duties as president of the Washington College October 1, 1865.

The President's house at Lexington was soon made ready for him, and this became his home for the remaining five years of his life. Its broad, sloping lawn and cool verandas became very dear to him—a place of retreat and rest until the end.

and had ordered down Pagan, and even now the light batteries of Brander and Elliott were rattling through the town at a sharp trot, with cannoneers mounted, the sweet, serene face of their boy-colonel lit up with that glow which to his men meant hotly impending fight."

## Lee, the Ideal Christian Knight.

"Surely, it is meet that with each recurring year, the survivors of such an army should gather together to renew old ties of comradeship, to do honor to the memory of the dead, to discuss the great events in which they shared."

"This last shall they do as becomes brave men—with no bitterness, no bootless railing against the malice of fortune, but temperately and with chastened pride, yielding generous recognition of the soldierly virtues of their old adversaries, now their fellow-citizens of a common country, shall the decorum of history be preserved and error be not perpetuated."

"It is a duty, comrades, which we owe our own self-respect and manhood, which we owe to our children, which we owe to our leader, whose fame shall shine with added lustre, when the true nature of his difficulties shall be laid bare—when it shall be made clear to all, to what measure Lee, the Soldier, stood in the shade of powers to which Lee, the Patriot, rendered patriotic obedience."

"Yet of this are we sure, that this is a fame which malice cannot touch, which flattery cannot injure—a fame which may well await the verdict of the ages, of which his ablest foreign critic speaks with such prophetic confidence: 'When History, with clear voice, shall recount the deeds done on either side, and the citizens of the whole Union do justice to the memories of the dead, and place above all others the name of him who, in strategy mighty, in battle terrible, in adversity, as in prosperity, a hero indeed, with the simple devotion to duty and the rare purity of the ideal Christian knight, joined all the kingly qualities of a leader of men.'"

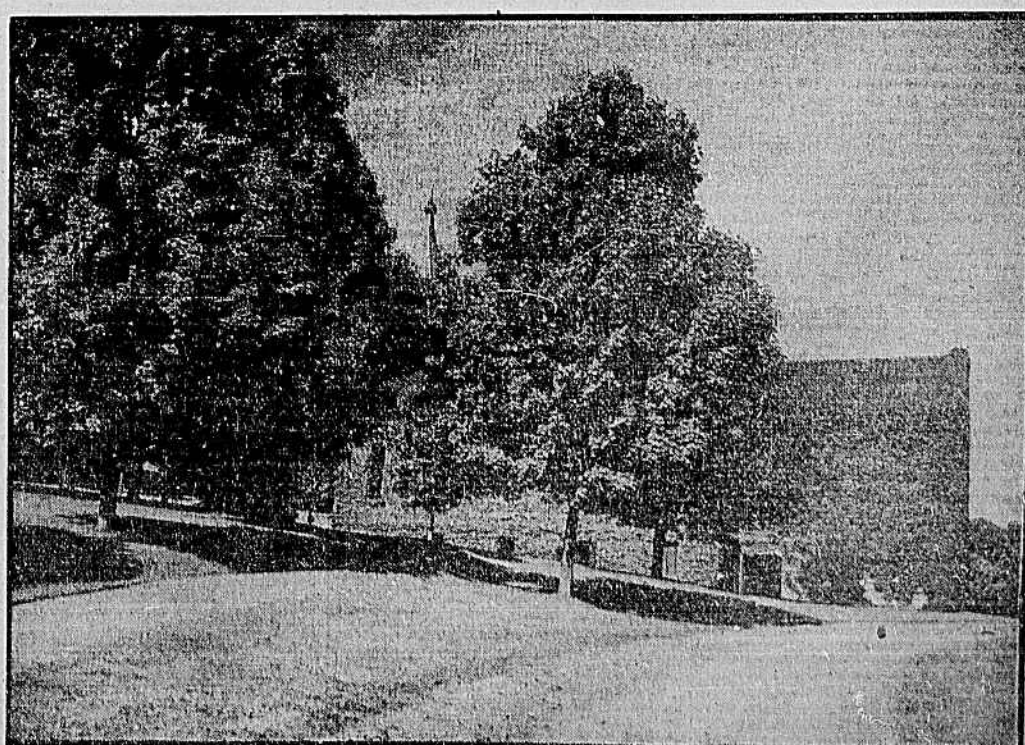
(Captain W. Gordon McCabe before the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia, in the Capitol, Richmond, Va., November 1, 1876.)

## GENERAL LEE ON TRAVELER



THIS ILLUSTRATION IS FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MILEY, THE ONLY ONE EVER TAKEN, OF GENERAL LEE MOUNTED ON HIS FAVORITE HORSE.

## WHERE GENERAL LEE IS BURIED



CHAPEL AT WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY, IN WHICH GENERAL LEE WORSHIPED WHILE LIVING IN LEXINGTON.